

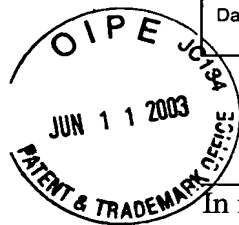
I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the U.S. Postal Service as Express Mail, Airbill No. ER147058350US, in an envelope addressed to: MS Non-Fee Amendment, Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450, on the date shown below.

Dated: 6-11-03

Signature:

*Elena Maglillo*  
(Elena M. Maglillo)

Docket No.: HO-P02368US0  
(PATENT)



**IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE**

In re Patent Application of:  
Dean Hughes, et al

Application No.: 10/073,705

Group Art Unit: 3732

Filed: February 11, 2002

Examiner: A. Ramana

For: POSTERIOR STABILIZED KNEE SYSTEM  
PROSTHETIC DEVICES EMPLOYING  
DIFFUSION HARDENED SURFACES

#8/a  
6/19/03  
D. Humer  
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JUN 18 2003

TECHNOLOGY CENTER R3700

**RESPONSE TO OFFICE ACTION DATED MARCH 11, 2003**

MS Non-Fee Amendment  
Commissioner for Patents  
P.O. Box 1450  
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Dear Sir:

Prior to examination on the merits, please amend the above-identified U.S. patent application as follows:

**In the Abstract**



Please replace the pending abstract in the application with the following new abstract:

A1  
An orthopedic implant with a diffusion-hardened surface on non-load bearing areas of the implant for interaction with non-load bearing surfaces of a polymeric bio-compatible material, such as UHMWPE (ultra-high molecular weight polyethylene). The orthopedic implant is a posterior stabilized knee prosthetic and system where a coating of oxidized zirconium is formed on the cam of the femoral prosthetic for interaction with the central post of a polymeric tibial insert. The diffusion-hardened surface of the orthopedic implant provides a strengthened cam and reduction in wear in the central post of the polymeric tibial insert.